

NERACOOS Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Seacoast Science Center (SSC)
August 31, 2009

Meeting convened at 9:37am by Executive Director, Ru Morrison

In attendance:

At SSC: Ru Morrison, Malcolm Spaulding, John Trowbridge, Janet Campbell, Bruce Carlisle, Christine Tilburg, Chris Nash, Pete Jumars, Cassie Durette (Admin. Assist.), Josie Quintrell (NFRA), Riley Young-Morse (GoMOOS), John Cannon (NWS), Betsy Nicholson (NOAA CSC).

NOAA IOOS (Phone):

Regina Evans, Jamie Verlaque

At UCONN: Jim O'Donnell, John Hare, Jack Ringleberg, Melissa Ryan (Alt), Cheryl Zimmerman, Al Hanson, John Conway, Ron Rozsa (SPI Team)

In Canada: Michael Szemerda and Peter Smith

▪ **Welcome and Introductions**

- Jim Chase, Vice President of SSC welcomed NERACOOS and looks forward to a great partnership.
- Malcolm- Welcomed everyone and acknowledged the rapid progress of NERACOOS. Since last meeting we have: Hired an executive director and assistant, gained office space, had interchange of board members, strategic plan is in process, new buoys, and change of buoy ownership from GoMOOS to UMaine.

▪ **NOAA IOOS conference call-** Presented legislation and grant process updates.

- Act signed March 30, 2009 and there is a lot to do. Updates:
 - Moving forward- Frustrated with funding, the hill is hearing concerns from multiple sides. Work with NFRA and RA's and NOAA IOOS together. It is overwhelming but they are doing what they can.
 - Grant process (Regina)- Changed over August 3. NERACOOS grants are all current in terms of progress and financial reports. Our contacts will be Regina Evans and Gabrielle Canonico.
 - 1. Webinar in October- More information to come. Anyone involved in grants are invited to join the webinar. For proposal writing help: www.ioos.gov/funding

▪ **Update on NFRA Activities and feedback on regional meeting in Seattle, Aug 24-27-** Josie Quintrell, Executive Director

- Four key items:
 1. New head of NOAA. Three key issues include climate, offshore renewable energy, and ecosystem based management-MSP.
 2. White House Task Force- Two charges by Sept. 10- Coordinated ocean policy and marine spatial planning. Adding IOOS's data would make system more dimensional. Real opportunity for strong partnership.
 3. NOAA IOOS Legislation- Have strong support on the hill, especially with Senate.

4. Funding- Started with 138M, now asking 98M (50M for RAs, 48M for IOOS). We need to make a compelling case. In FY10 grants, have three budgets- high level 3M, realistic, and fall back. In FY11, advocate for longer timeframe (5 yr).

- Competition between RAs- We need to emphasize the regional aspect of NFRA.
- Annual meeting in Seattle last week- New executive committee with Molly McCammon as Chair, Ru as Vice Chair, Christine Manninen as Secretary, and Julie Thomas as Treasurer. Happy to have Cassie on board, as part time help.
- National synthesis of regional plans- Last week, each RA came together and discussed current and future plans. Now working on a synthesis which will be important in making our case for 50M for each RA. There were four common themes: Ecosystem Health, Climate Trends, Water Quality, Marine Safety and Maritime Operations, and Coastal Hazards.
- Outreach- Build contacts with senates and key staff in preparation for March. More PR- Invite congressional reps. to meetings.
- Diversify funds- Are there other agencies that would be more appropriate for these themes other than NOAA?
- NFRA will continue collaboration with IOOS staff.
- Performance metrics- NFRA hears it often. There are a lot of opportunities if we finish these.
- There was emphasis on maintaining existing efforts as a priority and establishing other priorities on a regional basis. Relationship with NROC and NERACOOS should be maintained.
- Update from Ru on Seattle trip- Filled out product worksheet for each theme, based on planning efforts. The need to have a sustained IOOS effort in each region to form a national program was endorsed by NFRA.
- Update from Jim on Seattle trip- General sense of frustration for funding. Not a lot for short term budgets but program office will look for long term.

▪ **Approval of minutes from May 13 board meeting**

Moved by Peter Smith, Second by John Trowbridge, Unanimously APPROVED.

▪ **New Board Members**

Al Hanson (URI) replaced David Farmer, John Farrington (UMass-Dartmouth) replaced Frank Muller-Karger, Bonnie Spinazzola stepped down.

▪ **Committee Reports**

▪ **Finance (Ru)**

Suggestion from Committee is to schedule board meetings after grant planning meetings. Finance report breaks down operations and SPI expenses and is April to August but will be updated to be May to September. Budget is \$125,000 for SPI Team. We circulated expenditure plan previously by email but it was suggested that we have a 1-page printout summary at meetings for everyone. Request for another Board member to join the finance committee.

- Conflict of Interest, status of signing- Have all but 4 signed, Cassie will follow up.

▪ **Operations (Ru)**

- Office Location and support staff- Cassie is now on board as Administrative Assistant.
- Planning Grant Progress Report- Distributed in July, no comments.
- Travel Reimbursement- Please send in all paperwork if you haven't already done so. Submit all future travel reimbursements to Cassie.

- NERACOOS cash flow- We are operating on planning grant, \$375,000 total. Operating with an indirect estimated at 10.5%.
- Status of buoy transfer/GoMOOS update- GoMOOS buoys are now property of UMaine. GoMOOS is in negotiations to become part of GMRI. Not public until tentative date of October 1. Questions should be referred to Tom or Evan.
- Expansion of GOMDP, MOU- Both GOMDP and NERACOOS seem to have the same goals and efforts (functionalities, memberships, and regions of coverage), ODP bringing more nearshore focus. There was discussion about merging the two entities.
- NOAA RCOOS RFP, 1 yr- CT was cut, but Ru has cleared this with the program office.
- Question was raised about decision-making (past and future) regarding NOAA IOOS funds and process for determining NERACOOS support for specific assets (e.g., Buoy A). Moving forward, it was decided that Board would be engaged in such decisions based on recommendations from SPI Team.
- **Planning for participation in Spill of National Significance**, Portland, ME, March 2010- John Cannon, NWS in Gray, ME.
 - John addressed recent Hurricane Bill and noted that NERACOOS is included when setting weather advisories. NERACOOS data helped show coastal damage from the hurricane.
 - Hazards within the NERACOOS domain include oil spills. NERACOOS visibility data is critical, especially for tankers as it can prevent accidents.
 - Marine spill exercise is scheduled for March 2010. Portland, ME is the 2nd largest oil port on the East Coast.
 - John suggested that we showcase NERACOOS products (i.e., splash-over tool) and data during the drill.
 - Summary of questions: John suggests participating in NWS's briefings/phone calls. There was discussion about collaboration with HAZMAT; it was suggested that there be tools available on the website to help this relationship. There will be training in NH soon. Ru will contact Steve Lehmann to make sure we have the capacity for a real response.
 - Ru will follow up with Nancy Kinner at UNH and CG.
- **NERACOOS web presence and data distribution guideline**- Riley Young-Morse, GoMOOS
 - Timeline- Work started in May, and the new site went live on Friday.
 - Primary focus was to demonstrate functionality of regional data providers. There were many goals. Sections include: about, projects, theme areas, data access, education and outreach, and a calendar. Home page has real-time data and shows off our products.
 - Highlights include real-time data, data trends (12-hour history), zoom features, funding company's information, model forecast viewer, user's guide, NCOFS model, and the coastal planning and erosion tool.
 - Future directions- Continue to refine and develop, add more products.
 - NERACOOS Logo- Comments are welcome.
- **Strategic Planning and Implementation Team Update**- Jim O'Donnell, Ru Morrison, Ron Rozsa
 - Process- 60 people attended initial meeting. Had 4 focus area working groups, formed chairs for each WG, these chairs formed the SPI Executive Committee. Teleconference once a week, hired

Ron to coordinate writing, used GoogleDocs to share documents, have drafts for each section. Next meeting is Sept 16th; plan is to complete strategic plan draft. Executive summary has been drafted.

- Conclusion- some things are harder than others (hard to engage volunteers); will bring recommendations for near-term priorities to board after Sept 16th meeting; product proposal due in Oct, anticipate level funding.
- Discussion
 - There was discussion on how these documents relate to the planning proposal due October 30. The SPI Team will look into short- and long-term plans. Implementation plan should be a priority- will look at different scenarios (made up by Jim and Ru) at Sept 16 meeting. There was discussion about criteria for cutbacks. Jim welcomed any materials to be put to his attention before final review (e.g. user guides). The proposal should be written with a base and option and stay optimistic. Malcolm wants a routine evaluation group formed. We should set regional standard for performance metrics. Certification will be part of our plan, once defined by NOAA IOOS. There was clarification on three funded projects.
 - ACTION- Due September 18, the SPI Team was asked to provide a 3-page summary of key information such as major themes, leads, and budgets.
- **Other Administrative Issues**
 - Next (Annual) meeting- November 13, 2009 at the SSC in Rye, NH- Presence requested at annual meetings, satellite for other 3 meetings.
 - Travel reimbursement - Cassie will email proper documents.
 - Follow up- Ru will follow up with regional Sea Grant to get update soon on Board replacement for Bonnie Spinazzola.
 - NROC meeting- October 1. Betsy and Ru are talking to executive committee via telecom next week. Malcolm suggests that NERACOOS work cooperatively with NROC and to bring to the table that we can help each other.
 - Ship Time- Ru will follow up with Neal to understand implications before writing letter.
 - Thanks were extended to SSC (Jim Chase, Ru), satellite locations, and SPI Team (Jim O'Donnell and Ru).

Adjourned at 2:50pm.